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TORRES MARTINEZ
DESERT CAHUILLANAU-WIL-MAH
SU-KUT-MENYILTHE TORRES MARTINEZ DESERT CAHUILLA INDIANS

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December 18, 2002

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Perchlorate Contamination in Drinking Water Wells

Dear Senator Feinstein:

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our concerns related to perchlorate contamination of groundwater resources and drinking water wells within the Torres Martinez Indian Reservation. We have prepared and provide for your reference the attached briefing paper regarding our concerns and desired assistance.

We appreciate your efforts to convene a forum, and would like to coordinate with your office further dialogue and activities to develop solutions to this problem. We look forward to working with you to address this serious matter.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Belardo
Tribal Chairwoman

TORRES MARTINEZ DESERT CAHUILLA INDIANS**BRIEFING PAPER****PERCHLORATE CONTAMINATION IN DRINKING WATER WELLS
ON THE TORRES MARTINEZ INDIAN RESERVATION**Background:

- X The Tribe has recently confirmed detections of ammonium perchlorate (AP) in community wells on the Reservation at levels over 3 parts per billion (ppb). This coincides with reports of AP contamination in other wells in the Coachella Valley.
- X AP does not naturally occur in the Coachella Valley. The most likely source of contamination is Colorado River water, as AP is being discharged into the Colorado River in significant daily amounts from the Kerr-McGee rocket fuel factor in Henderson, Nevada, a facility that produced war munitions and other products on behalf of the Department of Defense, upstream of the diversion point that carries water to the Coachella Valley. There is a similar plume of contamination originating from the site of a similar factory formerly operated by Pacific Engineering and Production Co. (now American Pacific Corp.).
- X The pilot groundwater recharge activities of the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) include the injection of Colorado River water at a facility located near the Reservation on land owned by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), using Colorado River surface water that is provided, in part, through facilities operated by BOR.

Tribal Concerns:

- X Despite the current absence of enforceable drinking water standards for AP under either federal law or the laws of the State of California, there is significant evidence cited by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that AP poses health risks at any detectible level. These risks include impairment of thyroid function, growth and brain development, thus making infants and children, pregnant and nursing mothers, and persons with low-functioning thyroids or immune systems particularly sensitive.
- X The Reservation community has already shown particular sensitivity to thyroid conditions.
- X The Tribe currently has no alternative source of drinking water supply for Reservation residents.

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Assistance Sought:

- X Assistance to identify extent of contamination of Reservation groundwater. The Tribe seeks your office's assistance in engaging USEPA and other appropriate federal agencies to conduct comprehensive sampling and analysis.**
- X Near-term supply of bottled drinking water for Reservation residents. The Tribe seeks your office's assistance in engaging Indian Health Service (IHS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and other appropriate federal agencies, to obtain adequate funding to provide bottled drinking water to the Reservation community pending the implementation, with our federal trustees and others, of long-term remediation.**
- X Identification of and funding for appropriate treatment technologies for Reservation wells to ensure clean and safe drinking water is available to all Reservation residents. The Tribe seeks your office's assistance in engaging IHS, BIA, EPA, BOR, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Agriculture - Rural Development, and other appropriate federal agencies, to accomplish this.**
- X Clean up of AP at source (both Kerr-McGee facility and American Pacific facility) to prevent further contamination of Colorado River Water that will inevitably continue to be imported into the Coachella Valley. The Tribe seeks your assistance in placing the remediation of both sites on the National Priority List established under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, or under a separate Congressionally-mandated remediation directive.**
- X Modification of CVWD/BOR recharge activities to minimize risks to Reservation and other potable water supplies. The Tribe seeks your assistance in providing funding for treatment of Colorado River surface water prior to its introduction into the Coachella Valley groundwater aquifer.**

The Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians appreciates your support in obtaining the assistance needed to protect and preserve our Tribal trust resources and to provide clean and safe drinking water to all our Reservation residents.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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TELEFAX TRANSMITTAL

DATE: 16 JAN 03# OF PAGES, INCLUDING THIS PAGE: 5TO: KEVIN MAYER, Remedial Project Manager, EPA Region 9FAX PHONE NUMBER: 415. 947. 3526FROM: Richard R. Gundry, Hydrologist - Water RightsRe: letter to Sen. FeinsteinMESSAGE: Kevin,

Here's FAX from Mary Belardo herself containing
letter handed to Senator Feinstein @ MWD in Los
Angeles (with 2-page BRIEFING PAPER.
I hope this helps.

- RickNOTE: Any problems transmitting this FAX please contact: Rick Gundry, phone (909) 276-6276, Ext. 236, orat phone (909) 276-6624 or 2766625 x236.

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P. 1

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FROM: Mary Blader

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DATE: 1-16-03

RE: for info

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CC:

☐ URGENT

☐ FOR REVIEW

☐ PLEASE COMMENT

2FYI

☐ PLEASE REPLY

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